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ABSTRACT

Interest is growing in planning and implementing new systems of holding child and family services accountable for results. The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Project at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has supported and built upon recent state efforts to develop these new accountability systems for child and family services. The RBA reports, including this case study, are intended to help share insights and experiences in designing and implementing RBA systems. This report on RBA in Florida begins with a brief overview, which summarizes the key points in the case study. A section of sociodemographic information and information about the state's governance structure directs the reader to unique qualities of the state that have helped to influence its RBA work. A timeline of the most critical events in the design and implementation of RBA efforts is included, along with a list of the key terms and concepts used in the state. Each separate RBA effort is described in detail, including its history and impetus, those who initially sponsored the effort, and the legal mechanism behind the effort. In addition, the early champions and actors involved in each effort and the funding sources and resources that support the effort are noted, and the governance and coordination between this effort and any others that may exist are described. The design and implementation of each effort are also described in detail, including information about the planning of the effort; the selection of goals, indicators, and targets; the collection of data; and the ways in which stakeholders were involved. The report describes the state infrastructure that supports the effort, such as staff, computer resources, and training. Where applicable, the report describes the way in which program evaluation links to the RBA effort. Each section also includes information about how each effort is being used; for planning, citizen engagement, programming, budgeting and contracting, and communication. A list of key contacts is provided, and a final section describes in detail the objectives, scope, and methodology of the study. The report includes a table

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summarizing points of distinction among RBA efforts in the eight states studied. (EV)

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Aiming for Accountability: Florida. Reaching Results

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Harvard Family Research Project

AIMING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY:

FLORIDA

Karen Horsch

Harvard Family Research Project
Cambridge, MA
1998

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HARVARD FAMILY RESEARCH PROJECT

Founded in 1983 by Dr. Heather Weiss, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) is today at the center of a national movement to promote information regarding how states and communities are developing processes to improve and redesign child and family services and policies. HFRP's pathbreaking research provides practitioners, researchers, and policymakers with timely, insightful information about effective child and family services and policies.

Disseminating its research widely, HFRP links people, programs, ideas, and resources together to create innovative services and family-sustaining policies. HFRP's research helps states and communities create systems to monitor and assess programs and services. Using HFRP research and analysis, schools, agencies, and communities are learning about the best strategies for successful programming to improve child and family outcomes.

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AIMING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY:
FLORIDA

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Interest in planning and implementing new systems of holding child and family services accountable for results is growing rapidly — presenting both opportunities and challenges for policymakers, practitioners, and program managers. The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Project at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has supported and built upon recent state efforts to develop these new accountability systems for child and family services.

Recent changes in welfare — with increasing responsibility at the state and local levels — have implications for these new RBA efforts. With welfare reform, states will be challenged to provide effective and efficient services for children and families with fewer resources. States have been given increased flexibility in the administration of programs, and it seems likely that they will be held more accountable for program results. In turn, many states are giving counties increased flexibility in administering these programs and plan to hold local service agencies responsible for results.

Most states are in the early stages of planning and implementing their RBA efforts. However, given the recent devolution of welfare as well as changes in managed care, these new accountability systems appear to be here to stay. While states have many promising approaches, they are finding a need for avenues to share resources and experiences, to learn about these new systems, and to obtain information about pioneering states' efforts. HFRP's RBA reports, including this case study, are intended to help share insights and experiences in designing and implementing RBA systems.

What Is Results-Based Accountability?

Policymakers, service providers, and citizens use the term "results-based accountability" in many different ways. For some, this term refers to strategic planning with an emphasis on greater coordination of services around goals and desired results. For others, the term is used to imply a shift in responsibility from the federal to state and local levels and the corresponding reduction in regulation or "red tape" — that is, it refers to a replacement of "process regulations" (such as requiring certain credentials for foster care case workers) with a requirement for results data (such as reduced case loads). For others, the term is used to refer to data collection and reporting efforts.

At a minimum, the RBA efforts described in this report include the following four elements:

- Articulation of a vision about where the state or community would like to be;
- Development of goals and objectives;
- Public reporting of data on progress toward goals and objectives; and
- Regular use of RBA process and data.

Description of the Series

This case study report is part of a series of reports of state RBA efforts. The series includes eight state case studies and a cross-site analysis. The reports are designed to provide information about the design and implementation of the RBA systems in these states. In addition, each case highlights the state's unique lessons learned. The points of distinction of the RBA efforts in each of the eight states in the series are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Points of Distinction of State RBA Efforts

State	Points of Distinction
Florida	Florida's RBA efforts consist of three parts: statewide benchmarks, performance-based budgeting, and agency-level strategic planning. Several aspects of Florida's efforts are notable: • The active support and involvement by a variety of stakeholders, including the legislature and the private sector; • The strong focus on training and technical assistance in the state, provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and the legislatively-mandated Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability; and • The target budget approach used in the Florida Department of Children and Families, which identifies specific outcomes for the different populations the department serves.
Georgia	Georgia's RBA efforts include three parts: benchmarks for children and families, agency performance budgeting, and decentralization of some social services to the local level in exchange for a focus on results. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the RBA efforts in Georgia: • The top-down and bottom-up approach to RBA, which focuses a variety of stakeholders on results; • The early support by foundations to enable an emphasis on meaningful, people-level results; • The climate of change that supports risk-taking and innovation; and • The establishment of mechanisms to address concerns about locally-determined strategies and accountability as well as statewide oversight.
Iowa	Iowa's RBA efforts consist of statewide measures, agency performance measures, and local-level measures. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the Iowa case: • The use of public opinion polling, which has provided valuable citizen input; • The use of focus groups to enhance the RBA research process; and • Enterprise-wide strategic planning, which provides a framework for collaborative efforts among agencies to achieve common cross-site goals.

State	Points of Distinction
Minnesota	Minnesota's RBA efforts consist of statewide measures, child and family measures, agency performance measures, and local performance measures. The following characteristics also distinguish Minnesota: • The existence of multiple RBA efforts with differing origins and emphases, including the Executive Branch Minnesota Milestones, which focus on population-level goals and the legislature's performance accountability for state agencies; • The emphasis on "home grown" services, which leads to grassroots articulation and reporting of results data rather than a centralized RBA approach; and • The refinement of the Milestones and agency performance measures to build on lessons learned and to update the measures to reflect new priorities of the state's citizens.
North Carolina	North Carolina's RBA efforts consist of state agency performance budgeting, and a child and family initiative that focuses on results. In addition, the following characteristics in North Carolina are of note: • The role of the budget and planning offices in training, collecting, and analyzing performance budget data; • The political context in which the child and family initiative has been implemented and the way in which data have been used to expand this initiative; and • The quasi-experimental evaluation design used to measure the success of the child and family services initiative.
Ohio	Ohio's RBA efforts consist of a statewide framework for child and family services, decentralization of social services to the local level in exchange for a focus on results, and a state block grant and a new program that focus child and family services on results. In addition, the following elements in Ohio are noteworthy: • The strong commitment of the governor in supporting results-oriented child and family services; • Comprehensive planning efforts designed to streamline government services by focusing on results; • The greater flexibility given to county Councils in exchange for accountability that focuses on results; and • The messages from the state to the counties regarding state expectations to focus on results.

State	Points of Distinction
Oregon	Oregon's RBA efforts consist of a statewide framework for results, agency performance measures, and local measures. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the efforts in Oregon: • The way in which Oregon has relied on champions as a critical element for success. Leaders in key places — the executive branch, legislature, and private sector — have all been critical to the penetration of the concept of the Oregon Benchmarks; • The power of well-trained, highly qualified staff at all levels, which has been critical in designing the RBA effort; • The requirement that the benchmarks and strategic plans be revisited on a regular basis; • Citizen involvement as an element in the success of the RBA effort; and • The continuity of support for RBA efforts at all levels of involvement.
Vermont	Vermont's RBA efforts consist of a framework for child and family outcomes, a Department of Education (DOE) outcomes framework, and measures produced by the Agency of Human Services and the DOE. In addition, the following characteristics are significant: • The importance of establishing relationships and knowing key actors in the design and implementation of the effort; • The small size of the state, which creates relative ease in involving all stakeholders in the effort; and • The importance of foundation funding and technical assistance in establishing the RBA framework and allowing the state to be creative in using resources to implement RBA.

Audience

This case study report is part of our larger effort to disseminate information about RBA initiatives in states. The report is targeted to those responsible for designing and implementing RBA efforts for child and family services. As such, the cases include details about the history, design, implementation, and uses of each effort that could assist in designing and implementing similar efforts.

Format

Overview of Florida
The report begins with a brief overview which summarizes the key points in the case study.

Florida Context
A section of sociodemographic information and information about the state's governance structure directs the reader to unique qualities of the state that have helped to influence its RBA work. In addition, a description of the history and state/local culture provides details about the environment.

Timeline
The report includes a timeline of the most critical events in the design and implementation of the RBA efforts.

Terms and Concepts
A list of the key terms and concepts used in the state is included. Currently no standard set of definitions of RBA terms exists. States use similar terms for different concepts, and different terms for similar concepts. Additionally, we provide a list of acronyms specific to each state's RBA efforts.

Description of Each of Florida's RBA Efforts
Each separate RBA effort is described in detail in the case study. Each of these separate efforts is described in bold and begins a new chapter. Each section begins with a description of the history and impetus of the effort, including a description of those who initially sponsored the effort (such as the governor, legislature, or agency). We also describe the legal mechanism behind the effort (such as Executive Order, legislative mandate, etc.). In addition, the early champions and actors involved in each effort and the funding sources and resources that support the effort are noted. We also describe the governance and coordination between this effort and any others that may be in existence in the state.

The design and implementation of each effort are also described in detail. We include information about the planning of the effort (including a description of strategic planning efforts); the selection of goals, indicators, and targets; the collection of data; and the ways in which stakeholders were involved. In addition, we describe the state "infrastructure" that supports the effort, such as staff, computer resources, and training. Finally, where applicable, we describe the way in which program evaluation — specifically outcome evaluation efforts — links to the RBA effort.

Each section also includes information about how each effort is being used. The uses include planning, citizen engagement, programming, budgeting and contracting, and communication. In certain instances, the uses have yet to be determined.

Key Contacts
A list of key contacts familiar with different aspects of the effort is provided. This list is included in order to direct the reader to the experts who are most knowledgeable about many of the details of this report.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology
This section explains in detail the objectives of the study, the methodology used, and the range of states included in the series.

OVERVIEW OF FLORIDA

Unique Features of Florida's RBA Efforts

Florida provides a useful example of a large, diverse state, which has sought to develop a comprehensive accountability system that involves and attempts to speak to a wide variety of stakeholders while supporting the improved performance of public programs. Florida's accountability framework is composed of three components: statewide benchmarks, performance-based budgeting, and agency-level strategic planning. The statewide benchmarks provide information on cross-agency outcomes in seven areas. Performance budgeting and agency planning, which are required by state law to be linked, focus on the goals, objectives, and measures of specific state agency programs.

Several aspects of Florida's efforts are notable:

- Active support and involvement by a variety of stakeholders, including the legislature and the private sector;
- A strong focus on training and technical assistance in the state, provided by the governor's Office of Planning and Budget and the legislatively-mandated Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability; and
- A target budget approach used in the Florida Department of Children and Families, which identifies specific outcomes for the different populations the department serves.

Two accountability components, the statewide benchmarks and performance-based budgeting, result from the Government Performance and Accountability Act of 1994, itself motivated by a "good government" focus. This legislation, supported strongly by both the governor and the legislature, requires all state agencies to report on the performance of their programs and mandates the establishment of the Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People (GAP) to report publicly on statewide, cross-agency outcomes.

Summary of Florida's RBA Efforts

The GAP Benchmarks: The GAP Benchmarks are a set of statewide benchmarks, performance measures, and performance targets in seven program areas. The GAP Commission, a citizen board, reviews and publicly reports the benchmarks. With the assistance of a broad spectrum of constituents, the GAP Commission has developed these benchmarks, performance measures, and performance targets. The GAP Commission staff have worked hard to use the GAP Benchmarks to stimulate action and public will, and improve government performance. The GAP Commission has also attempted to work with the media to highlight state government work and attract the interest and activism of citizens and citizens' groups. According to some, the GAP Commission reports have served as an important advocacy tool for children and families as well as stimulated local government interest in performance reporting. This year, the GAP Commission will be conducting a cross-agency analysis of outcomes to identify populations

targeted by agency programs and identify duplication, service gaps, and opportunities for collaboration. Strong involvement by the private sector has helped in the conceptualization and implementation of the effort.[1]

Performance-Based Program Budgeting: Simultaneous with GAP Benchmarks, Florida has phased in performance-based program budgeting (PB^2) for state agencies. Under this system, each agency must report annually on its programs, including its customers and clients; purpose; costs; outputs, outcomes, and performance measures; baseline data; and performance standards. Identification and review of performance measures involves a variety of people, including agency staff, the governor's office, appropriations and substantive committees in the legislature, and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), and these measures become part of the general appropriations act. The 1994 Act also stipulates the use of incentives and sanctions around agency performance.

Implementation of the requirements of the legislation has been facilitated by OPPAGA and the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). Through training and technical assistance, these entities have helped staff of both agencies and the legislature to understand the requirements of the legislation, particularly the development of a common language, and to implement them. OPPAGA plays a consultative role to agencies by helping them to identify the programs to be included in PB^2 and to identify promising performance measures. It also helps the substantive committees of the legislature evaluate agency performance measures and verify the performance data reported by the agencies. OPB helps agencies develop their strategic plans, critiques agency measures, and develops the governor's budget. A phased-in approach to the implementation of PB^2 has served the state well, enabling it to identify areas where clarification and work are needed. It has also helped the state to identify the possibilities and limitations of the approach — by many accounts, the model for the structural and cultural change engendered by this approach is the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, which shows it is possible. While legislative support has been critical to moving and implementing PB^2, early champions have left the legislature, and commitment among current legislators and their staffs varies. As in many states, recent term limits for legislators will have an influence on this process.

The Accountability Efforts of the Florida Department of Children and Families: The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) has taken the mandate to establish a performance budget as an opportunity to develop a comprehensive accountability system that includes both planning and budgeting. The department has based this effort in an interrelated system of evaluation, management controls, and Inspector General (IG) functions. The movement to accountability has been facilitated by strong Secretary commitment to the process and the establishment of the Office of Standards and Evaluation (OSE). Responsibility for performance and evaluation falls to OSE, a legislatively-mandated office that reports directly to the Department Secretary. OSE has made the basis for DCF planning and budgeting sixteen client target groups. These target groups, identified through the broad participation of a number of different constituents, have guided the development of the department's strategic plan, and

[1] Recent (Spring 1998) action by the state legislature eliminated the funding for GAP. Attempts are being made to continue the GAP Commission's work outside of state government.

associated with each are outcomes and performance indicators on which data are reported to the legislature quarterly. Target groups have provided the department the opportunity to work on a population rather than a categorical level. DCF produces quarterly performance reports for consumers, legislative and executive staff, and department managers. Local health and human services (HHS) boards, which provide direction and leadership for social services at the local level, prepare an annual needs assessment and strategic plan which includes outcomes and performance measures. Districts report on performance to DCF on a quarterly basis. This, in conjunction with performance-based contracts with providers since July 1996, has helped the agency to maintain accountability in services. While target groups have helped department staff to move beyond a focus on their individual activities and integrate efforts, and have served as a useful means by which to educate the public about its work, staff here, as in other states, note the difficulty in and express concern about identifying and establishing meaning from a limited set of quantitative performance measures.

Although the pieces are in place, the integration of the parts is not yet complete, and this is the next challenge that Florida faces after identifying the gaps in information and filling them. The incremental nature of implementation leads to the state's next challenge — the integration of the three efforts. This requires learning from mistakes and improving on the process.

FLORIDA BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sociodemographic and Economic Status[2]

In 1995, Florida had a population of 14.2 million. Approximately 83 percent of its residents were Caucasian; African-Americans and Hispanics each composed an additional 13 percent of the population.[3] Florida's immigrant population is on the rise; it increased from 12.9 percent in 1990 to 15.2 percent in 1996, bringing it well above the national average of 9.3 percent. In 1995, twenty-four percent of Florida's residents were under the age of 18; this was just lower than the national average of 26.2 percent. Florida's population is aging; close to 19 percent of its population in 1995 was over the age of 65, much higher than the national average of 12 percent in that same year.

In 1995, Florida's per capita income was $23,061; the median income of families with children was $32,500. Sixteen percent of all Floridians and 25 percent of the state's children under the age of 18 lived in poverty. This last figure increased seven percentage points between 1990 and 1995, and was higher than the national average of 20.8 percent. The unemployment rate in Florida was 4.9 percent, in contrast to the U.S. rate of 5.3 percent, ranking Florida 25th in statewide unemployment in 1995.

Political Context for Children and Families [4]

Florida's governor, Lawton Chiles (D), began his second and last term in 1995. Florida has a predominantly Republican legislature; both the House and Senate are currently controlled by the Republican Party, although, historically, Florida has had a Democratic House. Like other states in this series, Florida's legislature is considered to be a "hybrid," in between full-[5] and part-time. It meets annually in February for 60 days. Both the House and Senate have term limits of four terms and two terms, respectively.

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[2] Information for this section was obtained from the following sources: Morgan, K.O., and Morgan, S. (1997). *State rankings, 1997: A statistical overview of the 50 United States*. Lawrence, KS: Morgan Quinto Press; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current population survey* and *state poverty rates*, online at www.census.gov; U.S. Department of Labor, *Bureau of Labor statistics*; *Statistical abstract of the United States, 1996*. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. (116th Edition); *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being*. (1997). Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation. Most data are from 1995. Data from the *KIDS COUNT data book* reflect the condition of children and families in 1994.

[3] The sum is greater than 100 percent because persons identifying themselves as Hispanic in the survey may have also been counted in one of the other racial categories.

[4] Information for this section was obtained from multiple sources, including: *The book of states, 1996-1997*. Lexington, KY: The Council of State Government; U.S. Term Limits, online at www.termlimits.org; and interviews with members of state, county, and local officials.

[5] Defined by Karl Kurtz, of the National Conference of State Legislatures, as having a large staff, with relatively high pay, and stable membership. See *Understanding the diversity of American state legislatures, extension of remarks*. (June 1992).

In Florida, state government has the primary responsibility for the administration of child and family programs receiving state and federal funds. However, many counties serve as the "safety net" provider for families and individuals who are not eligible for state and/or federal programs. Additionally, counties are authorized by the state to establish independent taxing authorities for children's services. As a result, many counties are able to provide transportation, child care, clothing, and food through the departments of social and human services.

Florida ranks 47th based on a composite ranking of indicators of child well-being.[6] Table 2, a selected listing of the child risk factors, illustrates this rating.

Table 2. Child Risk Factors

Rating	Year	State	U.S.
% of two-year olds who were immunized	1995	78 %	75 %
% of children in extreme poverty (below 50% FPL)	1994	13 %	9 %
% of 4th grade students who scored below basic reading level	1994	50 %	41 %
% of 4th grade students who scored below basic math level	1996	45 %	38 %
% of low birth-weight babies	1994	7.7 %	7.3 %
% of teen birth rate (births per 1,000 females ages 15-17)	1994	42 %	38 %

Local Culture [7]

Florida's population has always been relatively heterogeneous, and today it is more ethnically diverse than any other Southern state. A large and growing percentage of the population is not Florida born, reflecting the state's high rate of foreign immigration and Florida's reputation as a prime retirement location. These factors contribute to the state's extremely low public welfare payments. Floridians have the reputation of being averse to providing welfare to non-natives seeking the comfort of its environment. Additionally, Florida has no personal income tax — a boon to its wealthier residents, but a drawback to those citizens who need the assistance from very limited public funds. With the rapidly expanding and aging population, social services are unable to meet the current demand. Counties are now able to choose home rule as a means for dealing with this financial problem.

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[6] KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being.* (1997). Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation. This publication provides data on the educational, social, economic, and physical well-being of children.

[7] Information for this section was compiled from Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, Encyclopedia Americana, and Elazar, D.J. (1984). *American federalism: A view from the states* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Crowell, as well as from key informant interviews.

Like most southern states, Florida is considered to have a "traditionalistic" political culture.[8] As such, government is supposed to play an active role in maintaining the existing order. However, Florida's political culture shows strains of individualism; that is, a portion of the population believes that government should have very limited involvement in society, its primary concern being the marketplace and the encouragement of economic growth. In either culture, public involvement is not at the forefront.

[8] Elazar, D.J. (1984). *American federalism: A view from the states* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Crowell.

TIMELINE

1960s	• State Planning and Programming Act passed
1991	• Governor's Commission for Government by the People (predecessor to the Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People — GAP —) established
1994	• Florida Government Performance and Accountability Act passed • The GAP Commission established
1995	• First performance/program budget pilots begin in five agencies
1996	• Performance-based contracting for social service providers established
1997	• Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services reorganized, leading to the creation of the Department of Health and Department of Children and Families • Office of Standards and Evaluation in DCF established

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Currently no standard set of definitions of RBA terms exists. States use similar terms for different concepts, and different terms for similar concepts. Table 3 describes the terms and concepts used by Florida. Table 4 summarizes the acronyms used in this report.

Table 3. Key Concepts

Goal: Desired long-term condition of well-being for children, families, or communities

Benchmark: Quantifiable measure of progress of a desired long-term condition of well-being for children, families, or communities

Outcome: Quantifiable measure of the impact or public benefit of a program

Performance Measure: Desired improved effectiveness of agency, program, or service delivery mechanism

Standard: Target level of performance expressed in measurable terms and dates, against which actual achievement is compared

Table 4. Key Acronyms

CSC:	Children's Services Councils	**OPB:**	Office of Planning and Budget
DCF:	Department of Children and Families	**OPPAGA:**	Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability
FGAR:	Florida Government Accountability Report	**OSE:**	Office of Standards and Evaluation
GAP:	Government Accountability for the People	**PB^2:**	Performance-Based Program Budgeting
HHS:	Health and Human Services	**PPBS:**	Planning-Programming-Budgeting System
HRS:	Health and Rehabilitative Services	**RBA:**	Results-Based Accountability
IG:	Inspector General		

GAP BENCHMARKS PROVIDE CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE

The Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People (GAP) is responsible for the development of and reporting on statewide citizen outcomes that Florida is trying to achieve. The GAP Commission was established in the 1994 Florida Government Performance and Accountability Act as the permanent successor to the 1991 Governor's Commission for Government by the People.[9] The legislation specifically stated that the Commission was to:

- Serve as a citizen board to review state agency performance;
- Hold public hearings for agencies to explain aspects that led to success or failure of their programs;
- Receive testimony from the public as to state agency performance;
- Assess the progress of state agencies in meeting their missions, goals, and objectives;
- Make recommendations which could improve agency performance; and
- Prepare an annual report to the public.

The GAP Commission is composed of 15 people (9 private citizens and 6 public employees) who serve as volunteers and are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. In addition to the 15 commissioners, there are four full-time employees of the GAP Commission. The GAP Commission has two internal committees, one responsible for the production of the statewide benchmarks report and the other responsible for assisting agencies in their accountability efforts. Funding for the GAP Commission comes from the general funds in the legislature, and the amount varies from year to year. The GAP Commission also relies on corporate donations and in-kind contributions from agencies to provide other assistance, such as the production of its report.

History of the GAP Benchmarks

The Florida Benchmarks Took Two Years to Develop

The development of the statewide Florida Benchmarks began with the identification of seven program areas, including families and communities, the economy, and learning. GAP commissioners identified the areas, in part by holding public meetings which solicited citizen input in the identification of issues important to them.

Once the seven areas were identified, commissioners, with assistance from agency staff, legislators and staff, civic organizations, and a broad spectrum of nonprofit associations, identified outcomes. The Commission appointed a technical task force, composed of

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[9] The Governor's Commission for Government by the People was a temporary commission appointed by Governor Lawton Chiles and Lieutenant Governor Buddy McKay. The Commission advocated for budget reform and developed six principles for government, one of which was that "government should be results-focused." The recommendations of the Commission helped lead to the development of the 1994 accountability legislation and the establishment of the Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People, a body responsible for statewide benchmarks.

measurement experts such as demographers, economists, and auditors to help with the identification of valid and reliable measures. The GAP Commission held a series of public meetings to get citizen buy-in on the measures. Agency staff assisted the task force by identifying what measures were available and collected on a regular basis. The task force used data that were already available wherever possible. Advocacy groups, such as the Florida Center for Children and Youth (which has responsibility for the state's Annie E. Casey *KIDS COUNT Data Book*), also contributed by suggesting measures and assisting in their interpretation.[10] Two of the biggest pressures, the GAP Commission staff note, were keeping the measures both manageable and outcome-oriented. Some agency staff wanted many measures to reflect the different aspects and results of their programs; other staff were uncomfortable with the prospect of being held accountable for social indicators beyond an agency's immediate control.

The GAP Commission approved a set of 268 measures, which now make up the benchmark report. There are measures for all seven program areas. In the area of families and communities, for example, the GAP Commission is collecting benchmark data on the percentage of births to families at risk of poverty and instability, children living in poverty, children leaving foster care who were reunited with their families, and young children in poverty who are in day care.[11]

The GAP Commission recently set targets for 60 critical benchmarks for the years 2000 and 2010. To do this, the GAP Commission used a Delphi process canvassing 2000 activist citizens nominated by 95 organizations and state and local agencies. The GAP Commission found this approach to be both useful and less costly than the citizen survey it had originally intended.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

Building Relationships and Support at a Variety of Levels Is Necessary
Throughout the process of identifying program areas, outcomes, and benchmark indicators, the GAP Commission employed a participatory process, which included agency staff as well as citizens. It is important, the GAP Commission staff note, to build the commitment to, as well as ownership of, the process and the results among a variety of stakeholders.

The private sector has also been an important force in the movement to develop statewide benchmarks and performance-based budgeting. Public interest groups such as Florida TaxWatch, the Florida Council of 100, and the Florida Chamber of Commerce have been instrumental in the conceptualization and the advocacy for PB^2 and the GAP Commission in Florida.[12] Today, the private sector continues its involvement with the GAP Commission, with several members

[10] KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. The annual *KIDS COUNT data book* provides data on the educational, social, economic, and physical well-being of children.

[11] GAP Commission. (1996). *The Florida benchmarks report.* Tallahassee, FL: Author.

[12] Florida TaxWatch, Inc. is a nonprofit research organization. In the mid-1980s, it produced a report titled *Building a better Florida*, which called for accountability in government and the establishment of a performance-based budgeting system.

serving on the GAP Commission. The private sector, many note, has proven to be an important ally in the accountability effort and has helped to bring credibility to it. Additionally, as the early supporters of PB^2 have left the legislature, the private sector and public interest counterparts and allies continue to play an important role in monitoring, advocating, and institutionalizing the benchmarks and performance-budgeting in Florida.

Uses of GAP Commission Benchmarks

The GAP Commission Reports Are Used to Publicize Florida Government's Work
The GAP Commission produces two reports, the *Florida Benchmarks Report* and the *Critical Benchmark Goals*. These are each produced biennially and in alternating years and are distributed to Florida government as well as private citizens. (See Figure 1.)

The GAP Commission has worked to let the media on both sides of the political aisle know about its work and the state of Florida's citizens. While many note that the information in the reports is "not late-breaking news," but instead reflects systemic change, the GAP Commission has still managed to gain the support of newspapers. Editorial boards have written favorably about the reports. In 1995 and 1996, the GAP Commission wrote "letters to the editor" in the major city newspapers, encouraging citizens to insist that their legislators spend tax dollars based on results, not just campaign promises.

Several state sources note that the benchmarks have helped to highlight the concerns facing Florida's children and families. They have, for example, increased awareness of the inter-relatedness of social services and other state goals. As one person noted, while a significant proportion of the state budget is oriented toward families and health and human services, other aspects of government are typically viewed as more important. By focusing on outcome measures and engaging stakeholders, the reports have helped to bring legitimacy to health and human services, with the result that these services are now viewed as important contexts for economic development and environmental sustainability. Additionally, advocacy groups have found the reports useful: At least one group has used the benchmarks to help increase private sector interest in children and families.

The publicity surrounding the Florida Benchmarks has also increased local government interest in performance reporting. While some counties, such as Jacksonville, have been producing reports on the "state of the community" for several years, the GAP Commission is assisting other local governments to develop similar reports. Such localized reports, the GAP Commission staff note, are useful in informing residents about their communities and also provide information on results that cannot be easily aggregated to the state level.

Recent Examination of Cross-agency of Outcomes Is Designed to Focus Collaboration and Leveraging
The GAP Commission is taking RBA in a new direction this year with cross-agency analysis of outcomes. Agencies are being asked to report all activities and services that they provide to contribute to a single outcome; the first study focuses on juvenile crime rate. The GAP Commission is asking agencies to identify target population, type of service or activity, mode of

service delivery, goals, measurable outcomes, and service partners. Once the inventory is completed, the GAP Commission will bring agencies providing comparable or conflicting services to the table for discussions of collaboration and leveraging limited financial resources. Cross-agency findings can also be used to eliminate redundant or poorly performing activities. The initial inventory has uncovered nearly 250 activities conducted through state government across twenty-one agencies.[13]

[13] Recent (Spring 1998) action by the state legislature eliminated the funding for GAP. Attempts are being made to continue the GAP Commission's work outside of state government.

PERFORMANCE-BASED PROGRAM BUDGETING: A SHIFT TOWARD INCREASED AGENCY FLEXIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Beginning in 1994, Florida phased in performance-based program budgeting (PB^2), requiring all state agencies to report on performance by the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The impetus for this effort is the 1994 Florida Government Performance and Accountability Act which is designed to increase the flexibility of agencies to serve the needs of, and become more accountable to, Florida's citizens. Strongly supported by the legislature, the governor, and the lieutenant governor, the legislation calls for agencies to be accountable for the services and products they deliver; agencies to develop goals and objectives and performance measures; the measurement and evaluation of programs; an incentive system to encourage agencies to deliver services and products in the most efficient and effective manner; and increased agency authority and flexibility to use their resources.[14]

History of PB^2

PB^2 Has a Long History in Florida

Program budgeting is not new to Florida.[15] In the late 1960s, the State Planning and Programming Act introduced long-range state planning and short-range action programs and began a planning-programming-budgeting system (PPBS). While the intent was to link planning with budgeting, these efforts were hampered by inadequate staff and computer capacity to create a program budget. Current accountability efforts, some note, differ from less successful past efforts because there are better information systems and there are stronger champions. The idea of results accountability has permeated many agencies as well as the legislature. In the words of one source, at this point it "is inconceivable that someone should say this shouldn't be...it's like saying 'I don't think we need traffic lights.'"

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

Agencies Must Report Annually on the Performance of Their Programs

The foundation of the budget submissions are agency programs which are defined as "the set of activities undertaken in accordance with a plan of action organized to realize identifiable goals and objectives based on legislative authorization."[16] Each year, agencies must identify for each program: customers and clients; purpose; costs; outputs, outcomes, and performance measures; baseline data; and performance standards. The Executive Office of the Governor, appropriations and substantive committees in the legislature, and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability review these. Agencies may propose revisions of measures which

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[14] Florida Legislation 94-249.

[15] An excellent source of information on the history and experiences of performance budgeting in Florida and other states, as well as the lessons learned is *Performance-based program budgeting in context: History and comparison.* (1997). Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

[16] Florida Legislation 94-249.

are approved or disapproved by the Executive Office of the Governor. However, the Act stipulates that the legislature has *final* approval of all programs, performance measures, and standards.

Each state agency must also submit documentation to the Executive Office of the Governor regarding the validity, reliability, and appropriateness of each performance measure. It must indicate how the performance measure relates to its strategic plan and how it is used in management decision-making and other agency processes. The final agreed-upon measures and the performance standards become part of the general appropriations act and are the basis for agency accountability. The 1994 Act also states that the Executive Office of the Governor can submit recommendations on incentives and disincentives for an agency to the legislature and the legislature can annually specify any incentives and disincentives for agencies.[17] The agency responsible for child and family programs in Florida, the Florida Department for Children and Families (DCF), will submit its first performance-based budget this fiscal year.[18]

Program Evaluations and Justification Reviews Enable In-Depth Examination of Programs
The Government Performance and Accountability Act also requires that state agencies undergo program evaluation and justification reviews. The focus of these reviews, which are conducted by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), are to examine key accountability issues: purpose and specific public benefit of a program; progress toward achieving standards on performance measures; circumstances contributing to performance; and recommendations to make the program more efficient or effective. This review allows a better understanding of performance when the legislature compares agency performance against pre-set standards.[19] The Program Evaluation and Justification Reviews work in tandem with the legislative rewards and sanctions available under performance-based budgeting. The first of these reviews has been completed and presented to the legislature. The reviews have generated interest in reforming policies and using incentives and disincentives with agencies. By statute, the agency must address the fiscal recommendations of the reviews in their future budget requests to the legislature.

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[17] Incentives indicated in the statute include flexibility in budget management, salary rate, position management, and retention of a portion of unexpended balances and/or additional funds. Disincentives include mandatory quarterly reports and/or appearances before the Executive or Legislature; elimination or restructuring of a program; reduction in positions; restriction/reduction of spending authority; and/or reduction of managerial salaries.

[18] DCF was established by statute effective January, 1997. Operational transition into the new department began in the summer of 1996. It was previously part of Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS). HRS was reorganized and two departments, DCF and the Department of Health, were created. DCF has responsibility for "all social, economic, developmental, and mental health and substance abuse services for which the state has authority" (HB 555).

[19] For example, the program may have performed well or poorly against standards, but the measures were not valid. Good or poor performance may also be related to whether standards were set too high or too low or the extent to which the external environment influenced results.

Training and Technical Assistance Have Been Key to Implementing PB²

Florida's movement to a performance budget has been assisted by a number of entities, which provide technical advice and training to agency and legislative staff. These entities have helped staff to understand the requirements of the legislation and implementation. Many note that the legislation did not provide clear definitions of the terms used in the accountability system (i.e., outcome, output, performance measures) and that this assistance has significantly contributed to the development of a "common language," although some note that additional training is needed to build consensus on the actual meaning of these concepts.

OPPAGA, a unit of the Office of the Auditor General, was established in the 1994 legislation to assist the legislature in the performance budgeting process. OPPAGA plays a consultative role to agencies by helping them to identify the programs to be included in PB² and to identify promising performance measures. It helps the substantive committees of the legislature evaluate agency performance measures that are approved and submitted by the governor's office and verify the performance data reported by the agencies. OPPAGA is in the process of developing an Internet encyclopedia of Florida's state government, the Florida Government Accountability Report (FGAR, Web address: www.oppaga.state.fl.us/government). FGAR will allow the legislature and the public to read about and monitor the activities, performance, and cost of about 380 state government agencies and programs. It supports the accountability process in Florida by tracking program performance on PB² measures and listing the GAP Benchmarks to which various state programs contribute.

Also supporting Florida's accountability efforts is the Florida Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). OPB provides training and technical assistance to help agencies develop their strategic plans and meet the PB² requirements. OPB also critiques agency measures and is responsible for the development of the governor's budget submission to the legislature, for which it uses the agencies' performance budget submissions.

The substantive committees of the legislature have begun to play an important role in this process. These committees bear responsibility for review, comment, and input on agency performance measures. The legislature, as noted above, is responsible for final approval of all measures. In many cases, these committees work with agency and gubernatorial staff to refine the measures.

The 1994 law also called for a substantial increase in the responsibility of the agencies' IGs. In addition to financial audits and investigative duties, IGs are now responsible for advising agencies on the development of performance measures, standards, and evaluation procedures; assessing the reliability and validity of measures and standards; and reviewing actions taken by an agency to improve program performance and meet program standards.[20] The state's Auditor General is responsible for conducting performance audits of each new major program and each major modification to an existing program. Finally, the Florida Department of Management

[20] Florida Legislation 94-249.

Services has a statewide contract through which state agencies may access several private consulting firms to provide assistance in strategic planning and performance measures.

Lesson Learned: Legislative Support Key in Moving and Implementing PB²
The legislature has been engaged in the accountability efforts from the beginning. This has been vital to the implementation of accountability efforts since Florida is a "weak governor" state.[21] Several early champions in the legislature developed and advocated for passage of the legislation. While the extent of commitment among current legislators and legislative staff varies, and many of the early champions have left the legislature, the recent leadership in both the Senate and the House has made the implementation of the 1994 law a high priority. Commitment and understanding of the process have also been reinforced by training that OPPAGA, OPB, consultants, and staff of the appropriations committees have provided to legislators and staff members. Indicative of legislators' commitment to and understanding of PB², one agency staff member pointed out, was the fact that they are now speaking with regularity about outcomes and indicators.

Florida recently instituted term limits for state legislators, and it is not yet clear how this might affect the state's accountability efforts. Some believe that more frequent turnover of legislators would increase the influence of staff and lobbyists and result in the loss of important institutional memory as well as less attention paid to performance results; others, however, argue that newer legislators may be less committed to old ways of doing things and find that the information generated by the accountability system helps them learn a complex system more quickly.

Lesson Learned: Early Lessons from Performance-budgeting Pilots Help in Refinement
Florida has phased in PB² slowly, minimizing, many sources indicate, the confusion about expectations for implementation, as well as helping to refine the process. Phasing in has helped to build consensus within agencies about outcomes and measures, and has eased the inevitable reconsideration of measures. In some cases, people in the state point out, the original measures were too ambitious; in other cases, they were too output-oriented. Some note that lessons from the state's early attempts at budget reform did much to inform the present process. For example, much of the legislative language incorporated into the 1994 Government Performance and Accountability Act can be found in the old Policy Analysis and Agency Review legislation of the late 1980s.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, one of the early pilots in the PB² process, has, in the opinion of many, shown how successful this effort can be. The department operates with a performance budget and has visible senior-level support for the approach. The department has also changed its daily management to a greater focus on results and accountability.

The experience of the early pilots also highlighted the important connection between agency strategic planning and meeting the budget requirements. A survey of the five agencies that had

[21] In Florida, as in several other states, the state constitution provides the governor with little power relative to the legislature. Six agency heads are elected and 15 are appointed by the governor. The Secretary for the Department of Children and Families is appointed.

begun PB^2 implementation in 1995 found that all five agencies credited their ongoing strategic planning processes with facilitating the introduction of PB^2.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: AN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM OF PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND EVALUATION [22]

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) has developed a department-wide performance improvement and accountability system that includes the preparation of an agency strategic plan and the performance budget submission. This work is designed to support continuous improvement and inform the legislature and the public about the performance of the agency. The system takes into account the policy and funding contexts within which DCF operates, establishes accountability processes within the organization, and defines products that DCF will produce and actions that it will take to improve its performance and accountability.

Florida statutes, federal law, and appropriations have defined the context, constraints, and opportunities within which the department operates. DCF has developed a mission statement, strategic plan, and service strategies and standards that help to define the direction for the department. DCF has identified three accountability processes:

- Evaluation (including performance evaluation, quality reviews, consumer feedback, and targeted program evaluation);
- Management controls (including supervision, competency testing, evaluation of training, and contract evaluation teams); and
- IG functions (including internal audits, investigations, and data validation).

These processes will enable the agency to report regularly on its performance, improve its operations, respond to the PB^2 requirements, and provide recommendations for changes in resources, legislation, and policies.

History of DCF

The Office of Standards and Evaluation Has Responsibility for DCF's Accountability Efforts
Mandated in the 1996 legislation, which created DCF, OSE combines the functions of planning, monitoring, and evaluating. It is specifically responsible for:

- Developing policy guidelines and coordinating agency and district strategic planning based on outcome and other performance measures;
- Establishing outcome measures and performance and productivity standards;

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[22] Although not specifically discussed in this report, it is important to note that the Florida Department of Education is also engaged in developing an accountability system. In 1991, Florida passed the Education Reform and Accountability Act, which identified six broad educational goals for the state and set up an accountability system with statewide indicators. The Florida Education Accountability Commission oversees this effort, which also requires that school districts produce an annual public accountability report and a school advisory committee report. Those interested in learning more about Florida's accountability work in education may wish to refer to *The basics of school improvement and accountability in Florida, 1996-97*, Florida Department of Education, http://www.firn.edu/doe/doehome.htm.

- Directing the development of monitoring and quality assurance systems for services;
- Validating the monitoring and quality assurance activities of service providers and staff;
- Conducting evaluations to determine whether improvement in the condition of individuals, families, and communities has occurred as a result of DCF programs and services;
- Consulting with the IG to ensure the integrity of the monitoring and evaluation process and the validity of the data derived from these activities;
- Developing procedures for the competitive procurement of external evaluations; and
- Developing the budget for DCF's evaluation efforts and identifying future evaluation needs.

The 1996 legislation funded staffing for this office, and there are currently nine professionals. This office is uniquely positioned in the department in that it, like the IG, cuts across all programs and functions within DCF and reports directly to the Secretary. Program offices in the department are responsible for ensuring services that are consistent with law; establishing program standards and performance objectives; reviewing, monitoring, and ensuring compliance with statewide standards and performance objectives; conducting outcome evaluations; and developing productivity standards. Local boards (See further discussion below) are responsible for establishing outcome measures consistent with statewide outcomes; negotiating district performance agreements with the Secretary; reviewing contract provider performance reports; establishing contract evaluation teams; and reporting data.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

Knowing Whom it Serves Helps DCF Plan and Budget

DCF has identified client target groups, rather than programs, as the foundation for its strategic plan as well as its forthcoming budget submission. Currently, there are 16 target groups.[23] Associated with each of these target groups are subgroups to further delineate the target populations. DCF has also identified key outcome indicators for each of these groups that it will report to the Executive and the Legislature and will use to help assess program progress.

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[23] These groups are: families with children in child care; families with children at risk of child abuse and neglect; children who have been abused or neglected by their families; child victims of abuse or neglect who have become eligible for adoption; children with an emotional handicap, serious emotional disturbance, or mental illness; children with or at serious risk of substance abuse; adults with disabilities and frail elderly at risk or victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation; adults with mental illness; adults with substance abuse problems; victims of domestic violence; persons with developmental disabilities; adults with disabilities who need long-term care to remain in the community; indigent persons who are unable to work due to age, disability, or incapacity; adults and their families who need assistance to become economically self-sufficient (WAGES participants); teenagers prohibited from living at home and at serious risk of delinquency due to chronic or extreme behavior; and children incompetent to proceed to juvenile justice.

The target groups were identified at a two-day meeting that involved the department's District Administrators and the Assistant Secretaries.[24] Four criteria were used to establish a target population: the public expectation of who should be served as expressed in statute; common characteristics; ability to determine the size of the group and track clients over time; and mutual exclusiveness of subgroups. The target groups were then submitted to and approved by the DCF Secretary.

Target groups guided the development of the department's strategic plan. The 1996-2002 strategic plan outlines the 16 target groups and their associated outcomes; performance indicators for each of the outcomes; trends and conditions; intervention strategies; and future outlook. The planning process began with the articulation of DCF's mission statement: *to work in partnership with local communities to help people be self-sufficient and live in stable families and communities*. This statement was developed by the Secretary and the department's Senior Management Council and reviewed by agency staff. The mission statement is written into the 1996 legislation that created the department.

Involved in the development of the new strategic plan were the department's planners, managers, and program staff. Broad outcomes were established by executive workgroups, with program and district input. Program content and data experts helped define the indicators for outcomes and client groups. The strategic plans of local boards were also used as input into the department's plan. DCF staff also involved those working in the area of information systems in the development and implementation of the strategic plan. The involvement of these staff helped DCF to identify constraints and opportunities for collecting and processing information on results.

Local Health and Human Services Boards Develop Their Own Strategic Plans
DCF is a decentralized agency. Responsibility and accountability for local human services planning rests with the Health and Human Services (HHS) boards. In each of the state's 15 health and human services districts, there is a District Administrator and a local HHS Board. The voluntary boards are composed of between 15 and 23 citizens appointed by the governor and local county commissions. They provide overall direction and leadership for the delivery of health and social services in their communities within the framework established by DCF. Specifically, the boards are, among other things, responsible for:

- Establishing district outcomes measures and objectives consistent with statewide outcomes policy parameters;
- Conducting needs assessments;
- Negotiating a district performance agreement with the Secretary;
- Providing oversight for the district budget and policies;
- Serving as a focal point for community participation;

[24] For a description of the district administrators and their function, see below.

- Advising the district administrator on ways to integrate the delivery of family and health care services at the local level; and
- Reviewing contractor provider performance records.

The statewide HHS Board, composed of the chairs of the district HHS Boards, is responsible for advising the Secretary on opportunities for effective and efficient local service delivery and the integration of health and family services.

Each HHS Board completes a needs assessment and strategic plan for its district. The needs assessment must enable public participation; assess desired outcomes; and assess service needs in order to prioritize the district's most critical concerns for the strategic plan. To ensure consistency, all district plans must address the target populations and indicators identified in DCF's strategic plan. Each district strategic plan also provides an assessment of each core outcome based on district data and demographics, and further identifies the district's highest priority services for each outcome. Districts are encouraged to use other measures from their needs assessments that represent the highest priorities in their communities. An annual service agreement is negotiated between the Secretary and each district administrator and HHS Board. HHS boards report to DCF on a quarterly basis.

In addition to HHS boards, Florida has Children's Services Councils (CSC), which are unique to the state. CSCs are independent, special, countywide taxing districts generating revenues dedicated to family and children's services through a millage authority. These entities are planning and coordinating bodies that focus on prevention, early intervention, and family support and provide contracts to other entities for support of these efforts. Boards are partially appointed by the governor, and each CSC is unique in its focus and activities. CSCs are locally directed and have outcome measures for contracts.

Provider Contracts Have a Performance Focus
Since July 1, 1996, DCF has established performance-based contracts with providers. All provider agencies now have performance measures in their contracts. The performance measures were developed by the district administrators, program offices, and providers. Standards are mutually agreed upon between providers and the department.

The 1996 legislation that created DCF also mandated contract evaluation teams in each district. These teams are responsible for assessing "the efficacy of district contracts and evaluat(ing) contractor performance and administrative compliance." They conduct a wider review of contractor performance and report findings to OSE.

Regular Reporting Helps DCF Track Results
Reporting on child and family outcomes in Florida occurs at the state and district levels. District-level data are collected and reported on a quarterly basis to DCF program offices. In this sense, the data "roll up" from districts to the central office.

DCF produces quarterly performance reports for consumers, legislative and executive staff, and department managers. These reports provide information on agency progress in meeting its

objectives. The reports highlight selected indicators, identify the major policy initiatives, and compare performance. The first report (for first quarter of the state fiscal year July-September 1996) covered key outcome indicators and performance standards, as well as major policy initiatives and organizational objectives. DCF intends to include best practices information, in addition to short analyses of performance gaps in the future. There is recognition, however, that longitudinal data on many of the measures will not be available until the 1998 legislative session.

DCF's 1997-98 budget request is organized according to DCF's sixteen target population groups. The purpose of this approach is to provide a clear focus for accountability and to support ongoing implementation of PB[2]. The report (See sample page in Table 5) presents, for each target group, its size, the broad statement of the result that DCF expects from investing in this group, the cost per client, the cost/benefit, the services provided to the group, the level of current investment (from all sources), the budget request, and the percent and number of people left unserved, even if the full budget request is approved (unmet need).

Table 5. DCF's Target Budget [25]

Target Group:	Families with children in child care
Size:	103,524
Goal:	To allow parents to work and maintain economic self-sufficiency and to provide care for children at high risk of abuse or neglect.
Cost/Benefit:	Child care is essential to welfare reform. Savings will be realized in future public assistance costs. By preparing children for school, child care lays the groundwork for children to become productive citizens.
Services:	Day care, transportation, limited case management services, and licensing of all child care facilities in the state.
Current Investment:	$205.3 million ($55.5 million general revenue, $149.8 million federal trust fund). This includes $189 million for subsidized child care and $16.2 million for child care licensing. Meets 57 percent of need, serving 59,065 children.
1997-98 Budget Request:	$60 million ($55 million general revenue, $5 million federal trust fund). Intended to meet the work participation requirements set forth in WAGES (welfare reform). Sufficient to meet an additional 18 percent of need, serving 18,744 children.
Unmet Need:	This investment would reduce unmet need to 25 percent, leaving 25,715 children of working poor families without child care.

[25] Florida Department of Children and Families. (1996). *Target budget.* Tallahassee, FL: Author.

Lesson Learned: Numbers and Data Can Only Tell So Much: "We Are Not Making Cadillacs"
Staff have found that it can be difficult to define performance measures in the area of child and family services because, as several sources noted, agencies are not producing a product, rather they are working on complex social issues. Some of these challenges come from the area of family preservation and support. Staff responsible for these programs have the challenge of trying to identify measures that convince skeptical audiences but are not easily misinterpreted. For example, in the area of child abuse, interpretation is often difficult. If rates of child abuse increase, determining success or failure can be difficult — did rates increase because the interventions are not working, or did they increase because the program has been successful in promoting increased reporting of child abuse? The department has also faced the challenge of developing measurement instruments that are appropriate in a culturally diverse state like Florida and in identifying measures of quality as well as outcomes. Finally, as many in the department note, numbers and data can only tell so much about child and family programs. This, they believe, points to the importance of additional information to help audiences understand the context and meaning of the data that are presented.

Uses of DCF Data

DCF's Accountability Efforts Provide Focus for the Department's Work
Staff note that the movement toward strategic planning and accountability for results has helped to focus the department's work. The identification of who the department serves has helped in the process of identifying important department outcomes and has also helped in educating the public about the department's work. In the words of one person, "people are starting to understand what they do and how it relates" to broader impacts. Some also argue that the process of examining the programs that serve target groups has helped the department to identify and reduce areas of duplication.

The collection and reporting of results data will also help the department to focus its evaluation efforts. OSE will use the performance information generated by the RBA system to monitor programs and identify areas of success and failure for further evaluation. OSE plans to use evaluation to help the department learn about what causes results. The 1996 legislation mandated the department to evaluate its programs. There are resources and staff at OSE to conduct evaluation, and financial support for evaluation efforts is designated in the 1996 legislation — OSE has the option of taking a fraction of the department's general revenue to use for evaluation.

Lesson Learned: A Strong Champion and an Office with Specific Accountability Functions Move the RBA Effort Along
Since joining the department, Secretary Ed Feaver has been a strong proponent of a movement to accountability and an advocate for the department's efforts to both the executive and the legislature. Whereas in some agencies, those responsible for the accountability efforts have had to educate senior management, many state that this is not the case in DCF. As one individual noted, the fact that the Secretary can speak about the department's accountability efforts is a good indicator.

The existence of OSE has also, in the view of many, helped promote the department's accountability work. OSE is unusual in state government because it combines the often separate functions of planning, measurement, and evaluation into one office. In this office resides the expertise necessary to oversee the department's accountability efforts. The fact that the office is statutorily mandated has also helped strengthen its function. OSE is uniquely positioned in the department in that it reports directly to the Secretary rather than through assistant secretaries. Observations from the legislature note that OSE's expertise and organizational location may also help to increase legislative confidence in the department. Several legislative staffers note that an important consideration in the development of an accountability system is the credibility of the data; some see OSE playing a very important role in improving the credibility of child and family data that, in the past, have been regarded skeptically.

CONCLUSION:
"THIS IS NOT A STORY WITH AN ENDING"

Over the past few years, Florida has worked to implement an accountability framework based on three accountability components — PB^2, agency strategic plans, and statewide benchmarks. One of the valuable lessons learned from Florida's PB^2 process is that the incremental nature of its implementation facilitated organizational and institutional learning. Agencies have had time to "learn from their mistakes" regarding the creation of measures, which has enabled legislators, contractors, and other stakeholders to learn more and develop an affinity for the budgeting process.

The incremental nature of implementation has also led to the state's next challenge — the integration of the three efforts. The GAP Benchmarks, for example, while used for statewide reporting, do not often "link" to the measures identified in agency strategic plans or those submitted to the legislature for performance budgeting. The challenge in doing so, people in Florida note, is negotiating the information needs of different decision makers. The GAP Benchmarks, for example, provide useful information on the overall status of Floridians and their state, but are too high-level and long-term for legislative policymaking or for holding agencies accountable. Additionally, agency strategic plans are not closely linked to agency performance budget submissions. While agency plans focus on a five-year time horizon, legislators tend to take a much shorter view.

While Florida has made much progress in a short number of years, many point out that much more work needs to be done. As noted above, the different components now need to be integrated and linked. At the agency level, measures will be refined over time, as the challenges of data collection, analysis, and interpretation become known. Everyone involved in the effort will need to determine what "accountability" means and how this might be achieved. Many note that in the development of such systems, patience is needed — as well as recognition that there will be mistakes along the way.

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OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

The objective of this case study is to describe the design, development, and implementation of Florida's RBA efforts, particularly those related to programs serving children and families. This report is directed toward people who are interested in learning about the efforts of this state and/or who may have a role in developing an RBA system in their own state, locality, or institution. The case study discusses the key RBA efforts in the state, the impetus for and history of these efforts, the governance structures, the design and implementation of these efforts (including the identification of goals, indicators, and targets), the current or proposed use of the systems, and some of the lessons learned.

Scope

HFRP has produced RBA case studies of eight states: Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, and Vermont. The research for these case studies was conducted between January 1996 and November 1997.

Methodology

HFRP staff utilized qualitative data collection methodologies to gather the information included in these case studies. Staff began the selection of the eight states chosen for our case studies by contacting key informants from national organizations who have been working in the area of RBA. These key informants nominated a number of states that were currently planning, designing, and/or implementing RBA systems for child and family programs. HFRP staff then contacted staff in these states and reviewed documents to learn more about the nature of their efforts. Additionally, HFRP contacted staff in a number of other states to learn if they were engaged in the development of RBA systems for child and family programs and, if so, what the nature of efforts was. Based on this research, HFRP staff identified the efforts of eighteen states, which are highlighted in our publication, *Resource Guide of Results-Based Accountability Efforts: Profiles of Selected States (1997).*

From the eighteen states profiled, HFRP selected eight states to study in-depth. The eight case study states were chosen because they represent different foci as well as various stages of development. These states are implementing a variety of accountability approaches, including statewide and agency-level strategic planning, performance-based budgeting, and performance-based contracting. Each state has conceptualized and developed its system in response to its needs, as well as the technical, organizational, and political constraints within which it operates.

To obtain information on each of the eight states' RBA efforts, HFRP staff reviewed a variety of documentation and conducted extensive telephone interviews with key informants at the state and local levels. Staff then conducted week-long site visits to each state. During each site visit, staff interviewed a number of personnel from governors' offices, state and local agencies, legislatures, advocacy groups, and universities. During these interviews, interviewees were asked about the key aspects of the conceptualization, development, and implementation of RBA

systems. They were also asked about challenges they faced in developing these efforts and the lessons that they had learned. Where possible, HFRP staff also attended planning meetings around RBA work. For each case study, HFRP interviewed at least 30 individuals with a variety of affiliations to obtain a comprehensive and varied view of the state's efforts.

Given the variety of RBA efforts in states, the multiple entities and actors involved, and the many components of these efforts, HFRP staff developed a multi-level analytic framework to examine the data. This framework enabled HFRP to code interview data by four categories: the system (for example, strategic planning, performance budgeting, performance contracting); the governance level (for example, statewide, inter-agency, agency, local entity); the aspect of the system (for example, history, design and implementation, uses, barriers and opportunities, sustainability); and the actor (for example, governor's staff; legislators/staff; agency staff; advocacy groups). In some cases, these dimensions were further refined. This multiple coding enabled HFRP staff to compile comprehensive descriptions of efforts in each state based on a variety of perspectives. This framework also enabled staff to examine a variety of cross-case themes (for example, the use of budgeting systems by legislatures across states and the processes agencies in different states have used to choose goals and indicators). A qualitative software package, NUD*IST©, facilitated analysis of the data.

We recognize that RBA systems are evolving and will continue to evolve in response to both implementation challenges and state and national policy changes. Therefore, we stress that the information contained in these case studies describes these states' RBA initiatives as of November 1997.

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